

May, 28, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC -Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) issued the following statement after the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced it would allocate \$1 million for planning projects to improve service on New York State's (NYS) "Empire Corridor."

"This is a positive first step that will allow New York State and CSX to move forward on planning a dedicated 3rd Track to establish high speed rail between Albany and Buffalo," **said Arcuri.** "This has been our hope from the start, to work to put New York State in a better position to compete for additional federal funding in the future. This project is the sort of bold investment that will create a boom of jobs and commercial activity in Upstate New York, reinventing our economy the way the Erie Canal did 150 years ago."

In January, USDOT announced that New York's Empire Corridor would receive \$151 million in Recovery Act funding as part of the National High Speed Rail network. The bulk of New York's Recovery Act funding is to construct a second track between Schenectady and Albany, the most congested section of the line and the top priority for the state.

The announcements in January were the first round of federal high speed rail grants and were supposed to be entirely for construction, but New York State received \$1 million for planning throughout the Corridor. This will allow NYS and CSX to begin the planning process for a 3rd Track for dedicated passenger service from Buffalo to Albany as NYS applies for part of an additional \$2.5 billion that was included in the FY10 Consolidated Appropriations Act for competitive high speed rail grants. Arcuri has also met with U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood to advocate for additional high speed rail projects eligible for this funding.

Also recently, Chairwoman of the House Transportation Subcommittee on Railroads, U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, visited Utica as one of only two stops in New York State during a "Whistle Stop Tour" to promote high speed rail and discussed with Arcuri, members of the local business community, labor and government leaders the impact further investment in Upstate New York would have on the regional economy.

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